

Mortimer, Adam (MAG)

From: Letang, Chris (SOLGEN)
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 5:27 PM
To: DiTommaso, Mario (SOLGEN); Stubbings, Richard (SOLGEN)
Cc: Unfried, Christa (SOLGEN); Abdi, Fuad (MCM)
Subject: Strategic Update - January 25th 2022

STRATEGIC UPDATES FOR DEPUTY SOLICITOR GENERAL

The information in this report is current to 2022-01-25 at 1630 hours.

Opposition to Public Health Measures

- A "World Wide Freedom Rally" occurred at Queen's Park, Toronto, on January 22, 2022. Attendance was estimated to be around 6000. Attendees gathered in the park from 1200-1330 and marched through the downtown core. A contingent of demonstrators (estimated 3000) moved through the area of the Minister of Health's private residence as part of their rally route.
 - A similar event was held in Waterloo, Ontario on January 23rd, 2022. Waterloo Regional Police Service was on site and no major issues were reported.
- Reporting continues to identify Public Health Units, employers with COVID-19 vaccine mandates, school boards and police agencies as vulnerable to protest actions. Demonstrations continue to occur at the private residences of public and elected officials associated with the pandemic response. Engagement with police of jurisdiction continues to ensure safety of the homes and situational awareness for potentially affected public officials.
 - On January 20, 2022, two individuals were arrested by Peterborough Police Service (PPS). Both were charged with criminal harassment and Intimidation of a Health Official (under the new Bill C-3 provisions of the Criminal Code). The charges were related to a protest that occurred at the residence of the Peterborough Medical Officer of Health (MOH) on January 19, 2022. *On January 24, 2022, the Peterborough MOH met with the OPSA at the MOH's request to discuss the incident. The MOH's concerns were shared, as was the importance of incident reporting and ongoing engagement with police of jurisdiction. The MOH noted that he had developed a good working relationship with the Chief of PPS.*
 - On January 23, 2022, the Niagara MOH reported to local police that his personal residence had been vandalized. Video surveillance footage provided to police revealed an individual threw rocks and broke a window at the residence. The matter is currently under investigation by Niagara Police Service.

ASSESSMENT

Currently, there is no specific identified threat and monitoring remains attuned toward where ideologically motivated extremism may manifest among participants in opposition activities.

Freedom Convoy

National Convoy

- Participants in the national convoy continue eastward to Ottawa after departing Metro Vancouver on January 23rd, 2022. The Calgary PS has advised the OPP that the convoy consisted of 20 to 25 trucks when it left the city on January, 25, 2022 (this morning).
- Information from the Regina Police Service on January 24, 2022 at 1700 hours indicated the mustering of approximately 1200 trucks. We have no accurate reporting as to how many of these trucks are part of the eastbound convoy. Parts of the Trans Canada Highway in Saskatchewan were closed on January 24, 2022 due to severe winter weather; road conditions could slow the convoy's progress or spread it out, with convoy routes changing with little warning.
- Reporting from the RCMP in Manitoba indicates that convoy participants are upset as a result of parts of the convoy having been directed to weigh scales and having been issued Highway Traffic Act infractions. Some online messaging suggests that these acts were an intentional tactic by police to disrupt the protest. OPP information indicates that weigh scales in Ontario will be closed.
- The GoFundMe account supporting the Freedom Convoy has been frozen by GoFundMe until it can be determined that the funds will be distributed transparently and in accordance with their terms of service. The GoFundMe account had raised over 4 million dollars from 553,000 donors as of Tuesday morning (January 25, 2022). A separate fundraiser ("ADOPT A TRUCKER") on the crowdfunding site "GiveSendGo.com" has raised \$27,957.
- The Canadian Trucking Alliance issued a statement noting its strong disapproval of protests on public roadways, highways and bridges that interfere with public safety. The CTA previously issued a statement condemning trucking protests that disrupted the Canada-US border crossing in Emerson, Manitoba on January 17, 2022

Ontario Convoy(s)

- Protests in support of the convoy are occurring at the local level. A local convoy in Windsor-Essex commenced January 23rd, 2022 and at times drove slower than they were supposed to and at points stopped and blocked lanes of traffic. No other incidents were reported. The Windsor-Essex convoy is expected to continue until January 27, 2022.
- Social media messaging unaffiliated with Freedom Convoy accounts is calling for a "bridge protest" in support of the Freedom Convoy for January 27, 2022 starting at 1230 hours. The messaging calls for supporters to attend bridges at the following locations: Albert Street and Simcoe Street (Oshawa); Thickson Street and Brock Street (Whitby); Harwood Avenue (Ajax); and Brock Road (Pickering) to coincide with when the national convoy is expected to traverse Durham.
- A range of individuals prescribing to anti-authority ideology appear to be supporting the convoy, albeit without the acknowledgment or approval of the convoy organizers. Anti-authority and white supremacist insignias and signs have been identified in pro-convoy social media sites and at a local protest in support of the convoy in Sudbury on January 21, 2022.
- Updates continue to be provided through provincial-wide joint intelligence groups. The Ontario Provincial Police is coordinating information and awareness to potentially affected jurisdictions.

ASSESSMENT

The noted convoys commencing January 23, 2022 and culminating at Parliament Hill, Ottawa on January 28, 2022 may disrupt the movement of vehicular traffic and goods in Ontario and strain the capacity of law enforcement in the province. Supporters of the initiative may impede vehicular traffic at the local level.

Convoy organizers have repeatedly stated the intention to conduct a lawful protest and have advised participants to sign a Code of Conduct articulating the appropriate behaviour for the convoy and protest. However, available information suggests that some elements within the convoy, or supporting the convoy, could engage in actions that pose a public safety threat. Convoy organizers will almost certainly have limited ability to influence or control the behaviour of some convoy participants and protest attendees.

The fact that convoy participation has been smaller than estimated should not be taken as an indicator that the number of people participating in the Freedom Convoy will be small. **The number of potential participants and supporters who may participate in the Freedom Convoys and the protest in Ottawa is unknown.** Online claims of current or anticipated convoy sizes are of unknown reliability. Online indicators of individuals attending are also unreliable.

False claims regarding the government's planned response to the protest continue to circulate online. False claims could exacerbate tensions and encourage convoy participants or supporters to engage in acts of extremism or violence against government assets, public officials, and law enforcement. It is also possible that these claims on social media could motivate protests in support of the convoys at the local level that could occur spontaneously or with little warning.

Chris Letang
Provincial Security Advisor
Office of the Provincial Security Advisor
Ministry of the Solicitor General
Province of Ontario
(416) 419-3219

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: The information contained in this email is confidential. It may also be privileged or protected by other legal rules. If you are not the intended recipient, please let us know by email reply and permanently delete the message from your system. You may not copy this message or disclose its contents to anyone.